

# LOCAL I-S



# NEWS

*for department store workers*

VOL 6, NO. 16

264

APRIL 1, 1955

## Shop Stewards Unanimously Approve Officers' Recommendation for Merger With CIO's RWDSU



Shop Stewards vote unanimously in favor of merger on recommendation of Union's officers. Expectations are for greater economic and political strength through unity.

Close to three hundred Local I-S Shop Stewards present at a special meeting at the Union office on the evening of March 11th gave their unanimous backing to the proposed merger of Local I-S and CIO's Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

Satisfied that their President, Sam Kovenetsky, and Vice Presidents Phil Hoffstein and Bill Atkinson, had won guarantees that fully protect Local I-S as an autonomous Union which must answer only to its members, the Stewards saw the possibilities of a new era in the department store field.

### President Reports

In his report to the Shop Stewards, President Kovenetsky reviewed the history of Local I-S and the respect the Union has earned in all sections of the country.

To the vigorous applause of the

department leaders, their President recalled that CIO President Walter Reuther said not long ago, "If I would have to join a union again, I would choose Local I-S!"

"But", said President Kovenetsky, "we cannot live on our past and present glory. To remain an important factor in the labor movement we must be an integral part of it. And today the trade unions of our country are uniting and increasing their bargaining and organizing strength. Either we, too, unite and increase our strength—or risk sliding backwards."

"The main—and most natural concern of your officers was the guaranteed independence of Local I-S", President Kovenetsky continued. "And we won those guarantees. We know that Local I-S members alone will continue to determine the policies of our Union, negotiate our contracts,

elect our own officers, be accorded the full respect that is our due and be allowed to secede (with all of our assets) if that should become necessary or desirable.

"Only with such guarantees could we recommend the merger we now propose!"

### Questions and Answers

The following is a summary of the question and answer period which followed President Kovenetsky's report to the Stewards. The answers were given by President Kovenetsky, Vice Presidents Phil Hoffstein and Bill Atkinson and Local I-S attorney Asher Schwartz:

### Q. What is the RWDSU?

A. The RWDSU is the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers Union. It is the international union to which CIO has given jurisdiction over all retail, wholesale and department store

local unions and for organizing workers in these industries.

### Q. What is the program of the RWDSU?

A. The RWDSU's Constitution says, in its Declaration of Objectives and Principles, that it "... reaffirms its devotion to the principles of industrial unionism as enunciated by the Congress of Industrial Organizations." It states as its objective the uniting within it "all workers employed in or

about retail, wholesale, department store, warehouse" etc., in order to "advance and safeguard their economic and social welfare".

The Constitution further declares that the RWDSU, "will strive to preserve the democratic processes of our country, protect civil liberties and aid in the adoption of legislation which will promote the economic and social welfare of its members and that of

(Continued on page 2)

### Official Notice

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 5th, 7:30 P.M.

MANHATTAN CENTER  
34th Street & 8th Avenue

\$2 Assessment to the Welfare Fund for unexcused absence

Admission by 1955 Union Card only



## BRANCH STORE NEWS

### FLATBUSH

Anne Bowen (F10) has been appointed our new Credit Union representative. She and Marion Hermann of the Service Desk are now making collections and taking applications for loans and savings on Mondays and Fridays during lunch hour . . . Esther Karp (F8) is quite excited over her daughter's piano audition on WQXR on April 24th . . . **WEDDINGS:** Mrs. Etta Phillips (F3) and Ruth Waldman (F9) announce the coming marriage of their daughters. . . The Selected Fifties extend thanks to all who helped the success of the cake sale. The proceeds will go toward the purchase of 53 bunnies for the unfortunate children on Welfare Island. . . Pat Anastasia has two important dates to remember—the 3rd and 4th of April. What makes them important, Pat? . . . Letitia Shuckes (F2) expects a blessed event . . . Ann Rosenfeld (F4) is recuperating after surgery and Ann Siegel (F6) is still out ill. Hope both recover and return soon . . . Happy to report that Mrs. B. Langer (F6) has returned after surgery . . . Rissie Moskowitz (Drapes) just celebrated a birthday and Hannah Singer (F6) another anniversary. . . A tip to the wise: Read the new Health Plan books carefully and know what you're entitled to. Don't wait for an emergency. Know before hand!



Rose Nagler

### WHITE PLAINS

Chairman Jim reports the new Committee to be operating in both an effective and efficient manner. "As elected representatives of the White Plains members, we insist upon prompt administration of the contract in order that our people will obtain the best working conditions and services available," the Committee states. "If we all cooperate with one another and have confidence in our Committee, we will continue to gain and benefit". . . Vinnie Lepore, "Click" Ruppert, Keith Toucey and Gus Selino made a trip to the Mardi Gras. From what we hear, our boys wowed 'em. . . Belated congrats in order to Barbara Isaacs and Steve Strozza. Steve is star pitcher on our softball team. . . Our Vice Chairman, Fred Ernst, promoting fellowship by starting bowling sessions every Monday night. Good turnouts have featured this activity. . . Elizabeth Miller, Service Desk, and Joe Cohen, Rugs, are both out ill. We wish them both a speedy recovery. . . Let's have 100% attendance at our next Shop Steward meeting. That is where the day-to-day problems can best be dealt with. . . But above all, let's all make sure to plan on a trip to New York on Tuesday, April 5th. That's the night of our General Membership Meeting at Manhattan Center. See you there!



Bill Bittner

### PARKCHESTER

Our recently elected store committee consists of Andy Feleccia, Al Smith and Katherine Hallihan. Congratulations to all three of them for the confidence they have earned among us. Andy is a newcomer to the committee, but as a former Administrator is no stranger to Union affairs. He is also our elected representative on the Welfare Board. I think I can safely say that the Committee can expect 100% cooperation from every one of us in the store. . . On the sick list, and we wish them all a very speedy recovery, are: Margaret Gaffney of the Men's Shop, Naomi Coyne, P7, Rose Christopher, Greeting Cards, Virginia Robinson, P8, Rose Nisita, P10, Ann Zazila, P10, Jo Lasker, P4, Tilly Heitzner, P2 and Rose Goldberg of the Flying Squad. . . Our most sincere condolences to Yetta Nackman of P10, Helen Dick, P10, Helen Goldberg, P10, Joe Iello and Lillian Branca of the Men's Shop. All have suffered recent bereavements. . . Congratulations to Annette Tambarino of P12 who has become a proud grandmother. . . Marichian Scheeran, formerly of P10, is now in Herald Square. We miss her and wish her luck. . . The stork is flying over Cosmetics again. Guess who! . . . Natalie Tully of P2 is dieting and says, "Get out your ration stamps—the beef is being sliced off!"



Fay Mattimiro

### JAMAICA

You can just bet that our Jamaica Bowling Team will come out on top. They trimmed all three teams (Branch) at a recent tournament at the "Roxy Bowling". They are really hot—so come on all you contenders, we're ready for you. . . Good luck to Paula Oliveto, who is now at the Service Desk and to Bea Galderisi, comely receptionist in the Beauty Salon and formerly of the Soda Bar. . . Best wishes to Edna Nerenberg, recently elected Shop Steward from J4 Coats. . . Congratulations and all our best wishes to Tom Anderson who became the proud father of Vicki Lynne—8 pounds, 7 ounces—who made her bow into this world on February 24th. . . It's wonderful to know that Dave "Smilin'" Jackson is back with us after a long illness. . . Best wishes to Sally Beese of J2 upon the marriage of her daughter, only to be saddened by the death of her mother. . . Condolences to Amy Hillman of the Order Board on the loss of her father. . . Edna McMullen of the Service Desk invited all her good friends to a housewarming at her new apartment on St. Patrick's Day. A wonderful time was had by all. . . If ever the long trek into the city was important, the coming meeting at Manhattan Center justifies it. Macy's refusal to negotiate and the proposed merger demand the participation and serious consideration of all of us who are concerned. Let's make it a point to have the kind of turnout that will show our interest and our unswerving support to our Union!

# Stewards Approve Merger...

(Continued from page 1)

labor in general. Through unity of purpose and action, through collective bargaining and legislation the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union is dedicated to the ideal of making the jobs of its members the best jobs that can be devised from the point of view of wages, hours of work, physical conditions and human relations."

**Q. Will the RWDSU have any right to tell us how to run our Union?**

**A. No!** Both under the RWDSU Constitution and the terms of the agreement we have reached with them, they will in no way have the right or power to interfere in our internal affairs. Only the members of Local 1-S will make decisions affecting our Union.

**Q. If Gimbels, for example, should go out on strike would we have to go out too?**

**A. The answer to the question is "No",** but suppose you turn the question around and ask, "If we go out on strike would Gimbels have to go out?" The fact is that as part of an international union representing other department store workers we can expect mutual cooperation and support. And don't forget, our contract expires next February and we are likely to be the first to benefit from that cooperation.

**Q. Just what will our relationship be with the other organized department stores?**

**A. First of all, Local 1-S has been offered the opportunity to name the RWDSU's Executive Vice President who will be in charge of their department store division. Second, we will name a Local 1-S member who will be a Vice President of the RWDSU. Third, we will name representatives to the Council of the RWDSU. They will meet with representatives of all other local unions affiliated with the RWDSU.**

Problems relating to the common good will be discussed and dealt with. But no decisions affecting individual locals can be made without the participation of the local itself.

The Constitution and By-Laws of Local 1-S will continue to deter-

mine how we run our own affairs. **Q. What purpose will the merger serve?**

**A. In this period we see unions throughout the country merging with each other. Differences are being buried in the interest of advancing a positive economic program.**

Our Union is strong, and we have always taken pride in that strength. But there can be no doubt that we gain additional strength when we are in a position to call on the money and manpower resources of an organization with more than 150,000 members as compared with our 8000. **Q. What will the merger mean to our relations with Macy's?**

**A. We will continue to be solely responsible for the negotiations of contracts with the company. But it will also mean that through the greater resources of the International Union we may be able to speed up the work of organizing the unorganized department store workers and of giving the leadership that will enable the already**

organized stores to raise their level to the point we have already reached.

These gains would make it impossible for Macy's to try to justify not bargaining in good faith because we are far ahead of the others.

### Conclusion

After all the questions had been asked, and answered to the satisfaction of the Stewards, one took the floor and remarked, "It seems to me that under this merger we will keep all of our rights and gain additional privileges, I think that's good for us!"

And it became evident that the others did, too. As President Kovenetsky asked all those in favor to raise their hands, a wave of arms shot into the air. When he asked if any were opposed, there wasn't a move in the Union's large auditorium.

The motion in favor of merging Local 1-S with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union was passed unanimously and referred to the membership for final action on April 5th.

## Union Presses Drive to Defeat Macy Arrogance



Macy "No-man" Fischer

"Macy's policy of refusing to bargain in good faith will only serve to strengthen our determination to press on to a full victory", declared President Sam Kovenetsky.

Citing the fact that the Union is prepared to submit its whole list of demands to an impartial arbitrator, the Local 1-S leader said, "It is not for us to determine whether or not an arbitrator will consider all of our demands under our present re-opening."

"All we know and are concerned with is the fact that our demands reflect the actual needs of the men and women who work in the store and that it is the job and responsibility of the Union to fight for them!"

"Macy's arrogant refusal to so much as make an effort to negotiate", the President continued, "is further proof of their absolute disregard for the people they employ."

### Demand Highlights

The Union's twelve demands awaiting a hearing before an arbitrator are:

- A 10 cent an hour wage increase
- Higher minimum wage
- Reduction in hours from 40 to 35 per week with no cut in take home pay.
- No cut in pay for those transferred to a lower rate job to avoid a layoff.
- Fully automatic wage structure from minimum to maximum.
- Increased pension payment to \$50 a month above Social Security and Profit Sharing.
- Job evaluation to eliminate all inequities.
- Limit the company's right to change schedules without the consent of the individual.
- Twelve sick days each year in addition to present sick leave provisions.
- Pay for supper hour when performing overtime work.
- Commissions to be paid on mail orders and commission department merchandise moved to tables.
- A contractual guarantee covering sponsoring pay.

### Action Urged

In a leaflet to the membership the Union's officers urged that Macy's top command be called upon to bargain in good faith.

All members were asked to write or phone Mr. Jack Straus, Mr. Wheelock Bingham or Mr. Fred Fischer demanding that the company honestly negotiate with the Union.

If you haven't done it yet—**DO IT NOW!** Make your voice heard in support of your demands and your Union!

## Last Call For Summer Camp Applications

April 7th is the absolute deadline for filing applications for the Local 1-S Summer Camp and Friendly Town program for children between the ages of 7 and 12.

Operated in conjunction with the Greater New York Fund, the camp program made pleasant vacations possible for many hundreds of New York children, including those of 1-S members.

Applications for the Summer Camp program are available at the Union office, and must be filled out and on record no later than April 7th.

You owe it to yourself and your child to plan a pleasant vacation. Do it now!

### HELP!

LEGAL CLINIC  
SOCIAL SERVICE  
COMPENSATION AID

Free of Charge

at the

UNION OFFICE

Every Wednesday  
From 5 to 7 P.M.

## LOCAL 1-S NEWS

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LOCAL 1-S UNITED DEPARTMENT STORE WORKERS OF AMERICA, CIO  
290 Seventh Avenue New York 1, N. Y.

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Editorial Board

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## Talking Shop

By Vice Presidents

Phil Hoffstein

and

Bill Atkinson



In this, and in alternate issues of the Local 1-S NEWS that will follow, we will discuss and analyze grievances and topics of general interest. Our aim in doing this is to alert the entire membership to problems that have been encountered and resolved in one area of the store so that similar problems might be more speedily and effectively dealt with if they arise in another area. We also hope that this column will help deepen the membership's understanding of events relating to the well-being of the Union as a whole.

We have noted, for instance, a number of cases in which members eligible for promotions have not even been considered because they had—at some time in the past—ruled themselves out. They did this by stating to the Macy record office that they were interested only in certain specific promotional jobs. On this basis, and in spite of adequate seniority and experience, Macy's has flatly refused to call such people in for interviews.

The Union has taken the position all along that members should under no circumstances close the door on themselves. When called for an interview you always have the right to decline specific openings and to wait for the one you may be interested in. But it is always possible that a good one will come along for which you would have wanted to be considered.

The trouble is that you will never even know about it—and will never be interviewed for it—unless you have told the record office that you want to be considered for any better job that opens.

It is our understanding that Macy's plans, in the near future, to re-interview everyone in the store. We urge you to make sure that your record leaves the door wide open. Do not list specific promotion preferences, because if you do those will be the only jobs the company will call you for—and you might wait years for a well-earned advancement!

Within the next few weeks the Union will be distributing—through its Floor Committees and Shop Stewards—a revised form of the Local 1-S Better Job Questionnaire. This questionnaire enables your Union to protect your rights to better jobs as you become eligible for them. The new questionnaire will take the place of the older one now on record at the Union office. Every member *MUST* fill out the new form if the Union is to have the information needed to challenge the company if and when they fail to live up to both the letter and the spirit of the contract.

In the course of our travels through selling, non-selling and offices we heard and overheard considerable comment about Macy's recent birthday party—and none of it was flattering to Macy's, we're pleased to say.

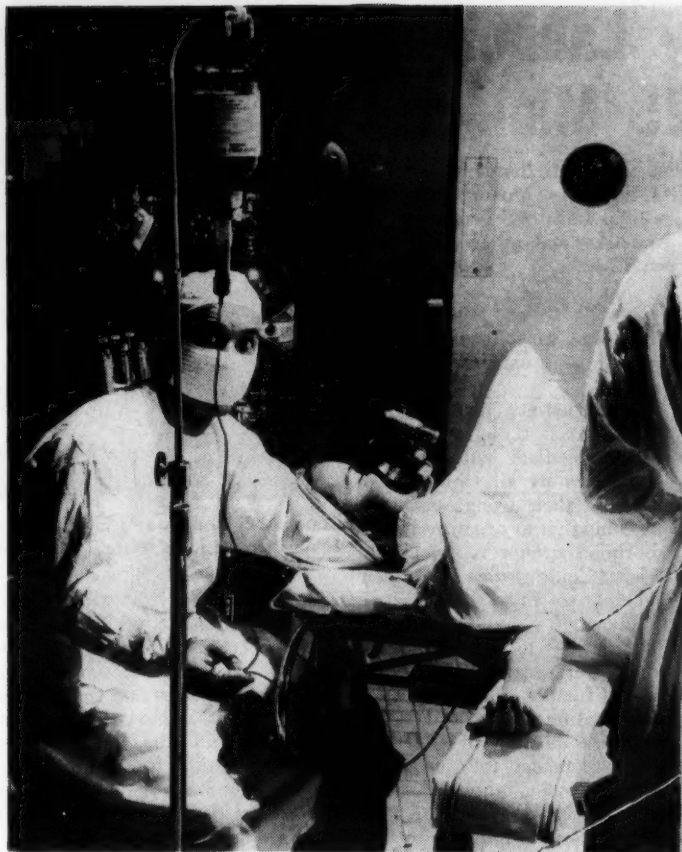
The prevailing attitude seemed to be, "Sure we go to their parties and eat their food. After all, it's not often that we get a chance to get away from the grind for a while. But if Macy's thinks that we are ready to accept those crumbs as a substitute for our contract demands they must be crazy!"

We also learned that a number of people deliberately stayed away because it was the only way they knew to show their disapproval of Macy's refusal to negotiate in good faith with the Union. They were also fearful that the company might use such an affair to try to convince the innocent that the boss is the worker's best friend.

One member who had obviously not joined Macy's in celebrating another prosperous year was heard saying to a co-worker, "I don't think those who went did any harm, but just imagine the good they all could have done for themselves if they had stayed away!"

During the past several weeks your officers have been touring the various divisions. The purpose of these periodic pilgrimages is to keep ourselves fully informed as to the nature of each operation in the store so that we can most effectively deal with grievances and negotiations concerning them. We have tried to miss nothing, but if we have you can be sure that we will be getting to it in the near future.

Wherever we go we find a quite natural interest in the state of our stalemated negotiations with Macy's. Up to now the company is standing pat on its refusal to bargain and the Union is firm in its insistence that your needs demand serious consideration. We are now concerned with finding an impartial arbitrator to judge the merits of your case. President Sam Kovenetsky will have a full report for you at the membership meeting on April 5th.



Who will the Blood Bank save next? One never knows . . .

## BLOOD BANK POURS OUT AID TO STRICKEN MEMBERS and FAMILIES

In the 74 days that elapsed between the first of January and the 15th of March Local 1-S had released a total of 111 pints of blood from the Blood Bank. This does not include blood released by Macy's to executive and exempt personnel who are also covered.

The heavy flow is accounted for in part by the extension of coverage to the parents of married as well as single members. It is also due to a sharp increase in the

needs of Union members themselves.

The increased utilization of the Blood Bank dramatically underscores the necessity of a tremendous turnout for the 1955 drive which is scheduled for May.

In order to provide themselves and their families with the continued protection of the Bank, every Union member must begin to plan now to sign a Pledge Sheet when it comes around.

The Pledge Sheet is simply a declaration of a willingness to give to the Blood Bank if the Red Cross physicians and nurses find you physically able to safely do so.

Based on the Blood Bank's experiences over the past four years it is evident that the special target of this year's drive must be those who have never given blood before.

Every man and woman who is an experienced donor should now become a recruiting agent and help convince the Blood Bank newcomer that giving to the Bank is easy and painless.

Help them understand that the Bank stands ready to protect them and their loved ones and they will more readily understand the necessity of rolling up their sleeves and volunteering.

Based on the response to the May campaign the joint Local 1-S, Macy's Blood Bank Committee will determine the extent of possible coverage during the coming Blood Bank year. Originally protection was available to Union members or exempt personnel and their husbands or wives and children covered by the Health Plan. This was subsequently broadened to temporarily include the parents of single members, and more recently to include the parents of married members as well.

The final answer is up to you. BE SURE TO SIGN A PLEDGE SHEET!



## HEALTH PLAN NOTE

If you plan to take a leave of absence (including maternity and military leave) for more than 30 days or if you leave the store and wish to continue your Health Plan coverage on a direct payment basis YOU MUST see the Local 1-S Health Plan Consultant at the Union office within 30 days from the end of the month in which you leave the store.

If you, or a member of your family covered by the Health Plan, enters the hospital you MUST call on the Union office for claim forms immediately on entering or as soon as possible thereafter.

Protect yourself—protect your family—protect your benefits. Be sure to come to the Union office on time!

## New Board

The following is the complete list of Executive Board and Floor Committee members elected in the recently concluded series of Divisional Meetings.

**White Plains**  
James Heleringer  
Fred Ernst  
Helen Ruderman

**Jamaica**  
Anthony LaSalvia  
Edward Hansell  
Chris Murphy

**Flatbush**  
Frieda Pariser  
Fred Kramer  
Anthony Biondo

**Parkchester**  
Andrew Fellicia  
Alfred Smith  
Katherine Hallihan

**Basement**  
Elvio Cotti  
Tania Shostak  
Eleanor Philips

**Street Floor**  
Jack Steinman  
Helen Boyle  
Ann Muller

**2nd Floor**  
Ann Gutowski  
William Yengle  
Ann Arata

**3rd Floor**  
Ceil Curry  
Esther Greenberg  
Katherine Blatt

**4th Floor**  
Mary Boyd  
Ceil Alperin  
Beatrice Montgomery

**5th Floor**  
Jerome Harte  
Irving Smooke  
Ann Berman

**6th Floor**  
Morris Telzer  
Earl Fulford  
Eugene Rawdin

**7th Floor**  
Joseph Dell Armo  
John Milito  
David Greenberg

**8th Floor**  
Charles Boyd  
Marion Cook  
Dorothea Andrews\*

**9th Floor**  
Neal Kuypers  
Ceil Goldberg\*  
Rubin Kaplan\*

**Controllers**  
Ruby Butscher  
John Witch  
Richard Moore

**Ad.-Display, B of S**  
Adam Graham  
Bernard Devlin\*  
Jack Weiner\*

**DA-CT**  
Mildred Kaplonski  
Gertrude Beisen  
Sylvia Temple

**ASD**  
Olga Moscatelli  
Veronica Fraites  
Virginia Girardin

**Comparison**  
Madeline Lawder  
William Hardy\*  
Mary Walsh\*

**Packing**  
Helene Roberts  
William Carey  
Augustine Tompkins

**Alteration & Repair**  
Harry Leibowitz  
Mary Delfino

**Housekeeping**  
Raymond Peer  
John Clifford

**Receiving**  
Tony Gentile  
Avion De Lagarde  
John Lee

**MTE**  
Harry Webster

**Food**  
Christian Ryan  
Evans Judson

**Supply**  
Joseph Baumann



**LOCAL 1-S, UNITED DEPARTMENT STORE WORKERS OF AMERICA, CIO**

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